

NEWS IN *brief*

Pilot ship hits oil tanker in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A pilot training ship of Chittagong Port Authority (CPA) yesterday collided with a tanker carrying edible oil. CPA Secretary Sayed Md Farhad Uddin said the accident occurred when the tanker, named Zakah, was offloading edible oil at a jetty of the Chittagong port around 11:30am. Due to the collision, the bottom of the tanker developed some cracks and around 15 liters of edible oil spilled out, he said.

French envoy meets Khaleda

UNB, Dhaka

Outgoing Ambassador of France in Bangladesh Charley Causseret paid a farewell call on Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia at the latter's Gulshan office last night. During the meeting they discussed matters of bilateral relations between Dhaka and Paris, according to the meeting sources.

Kabir Chy source of inspiration: Arefin

BSS, Dhaka

Late National Professor Kabir Chowdhury was not only a great educationist but also a source of inspiration in different fields of our national life, said Dhaka University (DU) Vice-Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique yesterday. Prof Arefin said this while inaugurating 'Kabir Chowdhury annual international seminar: Bangladesh and world culture' jointly organised by California Inter Culture Forum and DU at Senate Bhaban on the campus. National Professor Salahuddin Ahmed, Emeritus Prof Anisuzzaman, Emeritus Prof Afia Dil, Emeritus Prof Anwar Dil and Prof Shahin Kabir also spoke.

CALLING A STUDENT 'PROSTITUTE' HC orders probe against UNO

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday directed Rangpur divisional commissioner to investigate the allegations against Nilphamari Sadar upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) over her addressing a female college student as a "prostitute" and penalising her for "having a love affair" with a man.

During the hearing of a suo moto rule, the court asked the commissioner to submit the probe report by February 28.

The court said the investigation will be conducted in association with human rights organisations -- Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK) and Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association (BNWLA).

According to a Bangla daily report of January 16, UNO Kawsar Nasrin called an honours student of Nilphamari Government College a prostitute and fined her Tk 100 through a mobile court on January 13 for having a love affair with a school teacher.

The UNO, who appeared before it yesterday following a January 17 order, denied the allegation of calling the girl a prostitute. She, however, apologised unconditionally to the court for fining the girl through a mobile court trial.

The HC ordered Nasrin to turn up again on February 28. Nilphamari's Laksnichap Union Parishad Chairman Aminur Rahman, who was present during the mobile court, and the girl yesterday told the court that the UNO called the girl a prostitute.

The girl said the UNO's conduct with her has caused her immense damage and devastated the dignity of her family in the society.

The court asked the UNO, who was kept standing in the dock, whether any girl can get married if she is called a prostitute by a UNO.

Nasrin replied in the negative.

During yesterday's hearing, some leaders of ASK and BNWLA, including ASK chief Sultana Kamal, placed statements before the court and demanded punishment of the UNO.

The HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim fixed February 28 for hearing the rule it issued on January 17 upon the district's deputy commissioner, police superintendent and the UNO to explain why legal action should not be taken against the UNO.

Advocate Yusuf Hossain Humayun and barrister Mehedi Hossain Chowdhury argued for the UNO.



Dry weather likely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather is likely to remain dry with temporary partly cloudy sky over the country in 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Moderate to thick fog may occur over the river basins and light to moderate fog may occur elsewhere over the country during mid night till morning, Met Office said.

Mild to moderate cold wave is sweeping over Rajshahi, Rangpur, Khulna and Sylhet divisions and the regions of Tangail, Madaripur, Comilla, Feni, Barisal and Khepupara and it may continue.

Day and night temperature may rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over the country. The sun sets in the capital today at 5:39 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:42am.

Country's highest temperature 26.0 degree Celsius was recorded today at Teknaf and lowest 05.4 degrees at Srimongal.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	22.9	13.2	63	47
Chittagong	23.5	12.2	72	47
Rajshahi	22.9	07.8	87	59
Rangpur	22.2	09.0	88	75
Khulna	24.0	10.3	73	49
Barisal	24.5	09.5	76	73
Sylhet	23.9	09.7	99	64
Cox's Bazar	25.6	14.0	48	60



Police encircle activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal in front of Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday as the latter hold a human chain protesting "false accusations" against Tarique Rahman, the elder son of Leader of the Opposition and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia.

PHOTO: STAR

HARASSMENT Ctg teacher suspended

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The Chittagong City Corporation yesterday suspended a schoolteacher who had allegedly harassed a female student for not taking private tuition from him.

A probe committee was also formed with the CCC mayor's personal secretary as its head, and asked to submit a report on the matter in a week, Abdur Rahman, CCC acting education officer, told The Daily Star.

Besides, a process of taking departmental action against the teacher, Manchharul Islam, of Pathantuli Khan Saheb City Corporation Girls' High School, is underway, Rahman said.

The teacher's suspension came following a report in The Daily Star on Sunday, according to which Jannatul, a class nine student of the school, had been physically and mentally harassed by him for not receiving private tuition from him.

He had been offering her private tuition for a long time but she refused, the student was quoted as saying in the report.

Manchharul used to harass her often over trivial matters and at times for no reason. In such an incident on Saturday, the girl was going to assembly along with some classmates when Manchharul stopped her on the way and slapped her accusing her of being late at the school. He did not say anything to the others, the report says.

Meanwhile, the High Court, responding to the report, issued a suo moto rule on the same day, directing Manchharul to appear before it on February 7 to explain his conduct.

The court on Sunday also directed the CCC chief executive officer to submit a report in two weeks on what steps the authorities have taken against the teacher for torturing the student.

1,785 Yaba tablets seized, 2 arrested

CU CORRESPONDENT

Rab men arrested two drug peddlers and seized 1,785 pieces of Yaba tablets worth Tk 7.14 lakh in separate drives in the port city and Cox's Bazar early Sunday and yesterday.

The arrested are Rafique and Khadiza Khatun.

Rab personnel arrested Rafique from Sea View Residential Hotel at Kolatoli road in Cox's Bazar Sadar Police Station area yesterday and recovered 1,385 pieces of Yaba tablets there, said a press release.

In another drive, Rab men arrested Khadiza Khatun and seized 400 pieces of Yaba tablets from Rasel's Colony in Atatur Depot in the port city at around 8:00pm on Sunday.

Political culture moves towards positive direction: Shakhawat

BSS, Dhaka

Election Commissioner Brig Gen (retd) M Shakhawat Hussain yesterday said the country's political culture has moved towards a positive direction compared to any other time in the past.

"All the political parties, including the opposition, helped us (Election Commission) during our tenure, although the main opposition opposed many issues for the sake opposing", he said while talking to journalists on different aspects of their tenure at EC Secretariat.

Speaking of his five-year experiences as a commissioner, Shakhawat said, "I have tried to discharge my responsibilities as per my oath. At the beginning,

there were a lot of challenges and I had to go through tough times. But, the media gave me a lot of support".

The outgoing commissioner also welcomed the search committee formed by the president to constitute a new Election Commission and termed the initiative positive.

But, it would be more neutral if the Election Commission Secretariat was entrusted with performing the secretarial responsibilities instead of the cabinet division, he said. "The EC always performs as a neutral body", he added.

Shakhawat said that after long days, a structure has been formed for the constitution of the Election Commission with members of consti-

tutional bodies for the first time.

On the appointment of the head of the search committee, he said had the chief election commissioner been made the head of that committee, it would have been better.

Shakhawat said the reform proposal of the Election Commission would be sent to the government in a day or two.

On the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) election, he said it is a big challenge to hold the election. He, however, hoped the new election commission would hold the polls successfully.

Shakhawat also informed journalists that the election schedule for Shariatpur-3 constituency will be announced next week.



Bangabandhu Sangskritik Jote forms a human chain before Jatiya Press Club in the city yesterday protesting "conspiracies" against the government.

PHOTO: STAR

Khaleda to lead rally in Dhaka on Jan 29

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia will lead mass processions in the city on January 29 aiming to drum up public support in favour of her demand for restoration of the caretaker government system.

The decision was finalised in a meeting between leaders of the BNP-led four party alliance and like-minded parties at BNP's Nayapaltan office last night. BNP acting secretary general Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir presided over the meeting.

The procession will start from this office and parade different city streets.

On January 9, Khaleda declared this programme at a mammoth rally in Chittagong.

Pregnant woman 'poisoned to death'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A five-month pregnant housewife was allegedly poisoned to death by her husband at Pallabi in the city yesterday.

The deceased, Ismat Ara Rani, 22, lived with her husband, Md Faisal alias Rubel, at Mirpur section 11.

Rubel and his relatives brought Rani to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) around 1:00am yesterday where duty doctors declared her dead.

Rani's maternal uncle Sultan Miah told The Daily Star that they suspect that Rani's husband and in-laws poisoned her to death failing to realize dowry.

Two months into their marriage, Rubel started demanding Tk 2 lakh as dowry, which was not fulfilled, he said.

Police has picked up Rubel and, during interrogation, Rubel said that his wife was suffering from asthma and died of the disease.

Contact recruiting agencies, not middlemen: Experts

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Migration experts at a workshop yesterday advised overseas jobseekers to directly contact recruiting agencies for safe migration instead of middlemen (locally known as *dalals*) who cause migration costs to rise and other problems.

They also blamed negligence of the authorities concerned in bringing middlemen under the law or making them accountable, says a press release.

A study, "Role of recruiting agencies in the

recruitment process to ensure safe migration to prevent human trafficking", was disseminated at the workshop, organised by Centre for Women and Children Studies (CWCS) in the city's Biam auditorium.

Dr Zafar Ahmed Khan, expatriates' welfare and overseas employment secretary, Riazul Islam, BAIRA vice president, Prof Ishrat Shamim, CWCS president, Hazrat Ali, director general (acting) of Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training, and Sara Piazzanno, chief of party of Winrock International also spoke.

Two Tahrir men arrested in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested two activists, one of them a government official, of banned Islamist outfit Hizb ut-Tahrir in the capital's Norda early yesterday.

They also recovered many copies of a draft constitution that the banned organisation would like to adopt, maps, leaflets, compact disks, laptops and various publications from the accused.

The arrestees are Ashfaq-e-Zaman, 32, head of IT in a development project under the local government, and Fazle Wahab Litu, 43.

A team of DB personnel led by its Assistant Commissioner (AC) Tareq Bin Rashid arrested Ashfaq and Litu from their residences around 5:00am.

The detainees along with their associates were preparing to commit subversive acts in the diplomatic zones in Gulshan and Baridhara, said Monirul Islam, deputy commissioner of DB-South.

They also propagated their party publications in the area, he added.

However, the accused denied their involvement with Hizb ut-Tahrir when questioned by reporters.

"I am a member of Tablig (a non-political Islamic organisation)," said Litu.

When asked about the leaflet publications, CDs and laptops, Ashfaq said his younger brother Liton might be involved with the banned outfit and he kept the items in their house.

Law enforcers have strengthened their activities to nab members of Hizb ut-Tahrir after the army indicated its involvement in the recent foiled plot to topple the government.

Iajuddin's son gets bail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday granted ad-interim bail to Imtiaz Ahmed, son of former president Iajuddin Ahmed, in a case filed against him for allegedly assaulting the registrar of Atish Dipankar University of Science and Technology on January 8.

Metropolitan Magistrate Tanvir Ahmed passed the order upon a bond of Tk 10,000 with two guarantors after the counsels of both prosecution and defence told the court that their clients had earlier settled the matter amicably.

Imtiaz, founder member of the university's trustee board, is also charged for holding registrar Kabir Hossain Talukder hostage in the Gulshan house of Iajuddin and threatening him with death.

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